MONTEREY NEWS

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Town News

by Maggie Leonard & Will Marsh

Employees Compensation

The Select Board continues to work on town employee compensation packages with the main thrust being on controlling costs, particularly healthcare cost which are rising as much as 10 percent per year. The Board met with Finance Committee member Michael Storch on October 3rd to discuss the options (Finance Committee members Stan Ross and Dan Moriarty were not able to attend). To date much of the discussion has been about how to apportion the employer/employee split of the health insurance premiums. Select Board member Jon Sylbert said that he spoke with Moriarty and he agreed with the concept of a phased-in approach for the town/employee split. Currently employees of the town pay 10 percent of health insurance costs and the town pays 90 percent. Research from surrounding towns revealed that a 75/25 split is more common; however employees of the town have not received an increase in pay in the past year and board members are reluctant to take money out of their pockets.

An idea was floated to change the split to 75/25 and to increase salaries to offset the increase, but Michael Storch reported that the Finance Committee agreed that

Barbara Palmer

At the Bidwell House Museum Pumpkin Fest, October 9

adding the difference back into salaries didn't make sense and would affect future raises for staff, and also impact the town's contributions to the Berkshire County Retirement Fund. They suggested that new hires be offered the family plan at a 75/25 split and 80/20 for single plans, and that current employees would stay at the 90/10 split. The Finance Committee also suggested that going forward existing employees will contribute 50/50 to increased healthcare costs; if premiums are raised by 10% then the town will pay 5% and the employees will pay 5%. Storch thought this would be a good way to insulate the town somewhat from drastic increases in healthcare costs.

Select Board member Scott Jenssen suggested that a chart be created to show all the expenses of each department so that the board can see where the money is actually going. Storch replied that a similar project was done a few years ago and that what always goes up are the fixed costs over which the town has no control, such as energy and health insurance. Storch commented that the growth of the town budget "has not been dangerous" and added that "the only thing the town can cut is personnel. Last year we looked at every department. We may have to look at our replacement policy regarding capital improvements. Last year we had to replace every radio to the tune of $50,000! If we have to go to the voters to do an override, we are not in trouble yet." Sylbert said, "Not yet," but added that if the fixed costs continue to go up the town could easily be in a worse position next year.

The Select Board will meet with current town employees to go over the options available.

MMA Legislative Breakfast

Select board chair Wayne Burkhart and board member Jon Sylbert reported on a Massachusetts Municipal Association Legislative Breakfast they attended in Sheffield on Friday, September 30. Jon said that Rep. Smitty Pignatelli was there and that the breakfast was also well attended by Berkshire County select board members and town managers. Sylbert reported that there was a lot of discussion about windmills because some towns are facing siting of commercial wind turbines on their hilltops. Another popular topic was the fact that the commonwealth and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) have not offered to contribute the usual 25% that is typical when disasters are declared. According to the Select Board, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) will pay 75 percent of damage repair costs and MEMA typically will either pay the remaining 25 percent or split the difference with the town and pay 12.5 percent, with the town kicking in the other 12.5 percent.

Town Nurse Proposal

On October 17 the Select Board met with Kathy Tryon to hear a proposal to create the position of a Town Nurse. Kathy is attending Elms College in pursuit of a Bachelors of Nursing degree and, in addition to being an idea for the town, the proposal for a Town Nurse is also her honors project. Tryon believes that a Town Nurse would be beneficial for Monterey by providing preventative healthcare and by helping to manage chronic healthcare needs. Tryon said that she was surprised by her research of the 2010 census that revealed the poverty rate in Monterey to be 22.7 percent. She noted that the population of Monterey is "aging in place," with a median age in the 2000 census of 44.9 and the median age in the 2010 census being 51.1.

Tryon said that on the bright side rates of smoking have dropped and the number of people covered by health insurance has risen. However, research shows that rural populations tend to be less healthy and have worse health habits than their urban counterparts. Tryon explained that problems with transportation contribute to the health divide and also that rural culture and values tend to foster independence,

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with folks deciding to "tough it out" often putting off medical care until the situation is much worse. Tryon suggests that a Town nurse could provide more timely interventions, possibly lower healthcare costs, and definitely increase the quality of life for frail and elderly rural residents. She said that five to ten emergency calls per year could be avoided. "We have such wonderful emergency services in Monterey with the Police and Fire Departments. It would be great to also have a Town Nurse."

Police Chief Gareth Backhaus, Fire Chief Shawn Tryon, and nurse Wendy Tryon attended the meeting in support of Tryon's initiative. Chief Backhaus said, "From a Police Department perspective, there are a lot of elderly people home in unsupervised situations. Some folks need help with real basic stuff like filling medicine trays, and when they don't have it then they get off their meds and it's an emergency call for us." Shawn Tryon agreed and added, "We load people onto ambulances and then we don't do much for them after that. Also, we get a lot of repeat calls and this would help with that."

Kathy Tryon estimates that the program could be run for $51,000.00. Select Board chair Wayne Burkhart asked if any grants were available for such a program. Tryon responded that she had not found any yet, but that she had discussed her idea with Don Clawson from the Assessors Office and they concluded that to fund the program a Monterey property valued at $300,000 would have $3.00 added to the yearly taxes.

Bonner McAllester

Vegetable and fruit decorating at Monterey Community Center Fun Day

Tryon further explained the proposal: "This is not something that will replace emergency services. If someone calls with chest pains, I'm going to tell them to call 911. This program would help residents in their homes to manage and supervise chronic care, as well as helping to manage acute care needs that may not be provided for by health insurance policies." She was excited about the potential for screening and outreach for chronic health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, strokes, and cancer. She also said the Town Nurse could help prevent fall-related injuries and medication errors and help prevent hospital readmissions due to those factors.

Burkhart asked if the position would work with the Board of Health and if a Town Nurse would take any of the responsibilities of the Tri-Town Sanitarian. Tyron said that the Town Nurse would not replace the Tri-Town Sanitarian but would act as a liaison to the Board of Health for communicable disease surveillance and follow-up. She encouraged the board to check out an existing program in Richmond/West Stockbridge that was successfully implemented. Select Board members advised Tryon to make a similar presentation to the Board of Health and also made suggestions about the way to get an article on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting in May. >

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School District Funding

Finance Committee member Dan Moriarty met with the Select Board on October 24 to discuss current school district funding issues coming out of recent School Board meetings. The proposal to take on a $1.5 million capital bond to update school buildings and technology was defeated earlier this year when New Marlborough and Sheffield refused to agree to it. Among their concerns were the $750,000 for technology upgrades and the outdated engineer's report (done in 2006) used as the basis for the amount needed for buildings.

Moriarty reported that the first official request from the School Board to school district member towns to begin discussing the 2013 budget was expected the last week in October and that New Marlborough wants an updated engineer's report on what is needed to bring the buildings on the main campus (Mt. Everett) in Sheffield and the satellite schools in New Marlborough, Egremont, and Monterey up to a proper state. The question of the status of the satellite schools is an ongoing concern for the School Board, which feels that the amount of money required to repair and maintain those is more than the district can afford.

Wayne Burkhart pointed out that New Marlborough is going to have to decide if they are willing to give up their school to make the cost of education less. Jon Sylbert commented that even the $1.5 million capital bond that had been proposed and defeated is much less that what is needed for the main Sheffield campus alone over the next fifteen years. So as the negotiations begin on the 2013 school budget the larger question of the capital budget needed for the longer term continues to loom.

Police Report

Police Chief Gareth Backhaus reported that he had interviewed two candidates for the part-time officer positions that recently opened up. Both candidates have all their credentials and are ready to start training in Monterey. The Select Board approved the appointments of Bryan Moynihan and Santi Messina to six-month probationary periods as part-time Monterey Police officers.

Chief Backhaus's report on Police Department activity from September 19 through October 16 included the usual false alarms, reports of suspected suspicious activity, disabled motor vehicle assists, and well-being checks. There also were a number of animal problems: several instances of loose cows, also several instances of loose pigs (one digging up a yard), and lost dogs.

Highways and Operations

Director of Operations Maynard Forbes reported that he had met with a representative from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service regarding funding for repairs to River Road due to damage caused by Hurricane Irene. He brought the Select Board an agreement with NRCS that will provide the funding, as well as an estimate for the repairs. The board approved and signed the agreement.

Forbes reported that, among other activities, the Highway Department has continued to repair roads damaged by flood waters, paved several sections of Route 23, cleaned out catch basins, and scraped out ditches.

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Miscellaneous

Dan Moriarty reported to the Select Board that he is attempting to set up a meeting with MEMA, the state DEP and Board of Health, our state representative and senator, and the Select Board of Monterey and New Marlborough and Monterey to address both short- and long-term solutions to the flooding problems at Lake Buel. The first concern is cleaning up the debris left by Hurricane Irene. Most of the flooding usually occurs in Monterey, but most of the remediation needed will be in New Marlborough.

A public hearing on Verizon's application for a permit to install poles on Tyringham Road (a continuation of the February 25th hearing) will be scheduled and the abutters notified. Director of Operations Maynard Forbes has given his approval, and the pole locations and trees affected will be marked.

The Select Board approved Kutshers Sport Academy's requests for one-day beverage licenses for Saturday, October 29, and Saturday, November 5.

Mickey Jervas, a Library Trustee, met with the Select Board to thank them and Maynard Forbes for installing the fence behind the library to discourage people from going onto the dam, which is in bad repair and dangerous for anyone to be on. The Trustees feel that the fence is not enough deterrence as is and suggested that the ends be angled toward the river to make them more difficult to get around; also a lock needs to be put on the gate and warning signs put up. The Select Board felt these were good suggestions that should be passed on to Forbes. ॐ

Zoning Bylaw Overhaul Public Review Nov. 15

Monterey citizens are invited to join the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals on Tuesday, November 15, at 7:30 pm for a workshop meeting to review the first draft of the reorganization of the Monterey zoning bylaws. The Town Hall will open at 7 pm with refreshments served; the presentation of the zoning bylaws will begin at 7:30 pm.

The Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals have held three joint meetings in as many months, working with expert consultant Mark Bobrowski on revising the Monterey zoning bylaws. The boards are able to work with Bobrowski based on an $11,000 appropriation approved at last May's annual Town Meeting, and even the preliminary results are infinitely better organized than the current bylaws. In addition to clarifying and codifying the zoning bylaws, the final product will include more recent and lengthy bylaws such as the Common Driveways Bylaw (approved 2009) and the Telecommunications Bylaw (approved 2011). Up to now, these have been separate from the small Monterey Zoning Bylaws booklet available at the Town Hall. Thanks to Interdepartmental Secretary Melissa Noe, all current bylaws are always available online at the Town web site (www.montereyma.gov). However it is also convenient to have all the zoning bylaws together in one printed document available to the public.

The boards' consultant, Mark Bobrowski, is an attorney who specializes in land-use planning and municipal law and is the author of *Handbook of Massachusetts Land Use and Planning Law*, now in its second edition. He has been a professor at the New England School of Law since 1986, where he teaches Land Use Law, Real Property, and Administrative Law, and he is also a principal in the firm of Blatman, Bobrowski & Mead, LLC. Mark is very professional, really knows his stuff, and has worked with many towns in Massachusetts, including Great Barrington, Lenox, and Egremont.

Mr. Bobrowski will be present at the workshop meeting on Tuesday, November 15, to review the proposed changes to the zoning bylaws and to answer questions from the floor. Please join the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals for an interesting and informative meeting.

— Maggie Leonard

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October Wildlife Report

From ticks to flickers, October's wildlife was with us from our intimate places to roadway sightings to next-day evidence.

From Lake Buel area, Sue Protheroe reports a flock of bluebirds on the phone wires, a black squirrel, and a bald eagle over the lake. Suzanne Sawyer sent in crime scene photos from the day after, proving (if circumstantial evidence is ever proof) that bears can go up very narrow stairs and eat teeny thistle seeds. This happened on her second-floor deck and included a few seriously altered bird feeders.

Michelle Arnot reports birds feeding on her sodden lawn and meadow. It was a flock of flickers on the lawn, rooting in the wet turf with their beaks, and a red-railed hawk in the field, closing on mice and gulping them down. Also in the field was a mixed group of wild-chicken relatives, including big turkeys and half-sized mystery birds, finally identified as immature ruffed grouse. No ruff as of yet.

Will Marsh down on River Road reports that he had thought all of his neighbors, the turkey vultures, had left by the second week in October, but then saw a solitary one on October 24.

Alice Howell on Beartown Mountain Road phoned in about a bear. It came into the garage, helped itself to some garbage, and was chased up a tree by dogs. From this tree it finally came down. Alice also reports a coyote, on its own with no tree, dogs, nor garbage in the picture.

Here in East Monterey the ticks are back, on at least two species in the family. After a summer of no sightings at all, they are now a presence on our daily sightings as well as on our anatomy and that of our dog.

Speaking of intimacy, the porcupines here have ramped it up, coming into our summer kitchen in pursuit of apples. We ungenerously brought in all apples from the orchard and put the full baskets in the summer kitchen, which is open to the world via the woodshed. The porcupines come in quietly from the world and leave a mess for the next morning, like Michelle Arnot's bear. Tidying up after guests makes you feel relieved they are gone; at the same time you are certainly thrilled that they came.

Send in our wildlife news, thanks.

—Bonner McAllester
bmca@berkshire.net, 528-9385.

Submissions for "Monterey Miniatures" Exhibition

"Monterey Miniatures" will be the holiday show in the Knox Gallery at the Monterey Library, with an opening on Friday, December 2, from 6 to 8 pm, and running to the end of January. The opening will also be a preview of the Monterey Makers Studio Tour, with artists in the tour represented by their own miniatures. The Studio Tour will be held on December 3 from 10 am–4 pm, and you will be able to pick up a map at the Friday night opening.

We are calling all area artists and craftspeople to submit two-dimensional and three-dimensional miniatures for the show. We are defining "miniature" as any work of art that is no more than 6 inches in any dimension, frame not included. Work may be made available for purchase or labeled NFS. Artists may submit up to three pieces initially; a work that is purchased during the exhibition may be replaced. All wall art must be ready to hang. Additional information will be found on the submission form.

To let us know that you intend to participate, you must fill out the submission form available at the Monterey Library, Monterey Town Hall, or at the Monterey Library website www.montereyma.gov/public (go to Town Departments and then The Library). This form must be returned by November 26. It can be returned to the Library and placed in the envelope in the Knox Gallery, or mailed to Ellen Grenadier, PO Box 551, Monterey MA 01245.

Finally, the artwork can be delivered to the Knox Gallery on Monday, November 28 or Tuesday, November 29, during Library hours. Please call Ellen Grenadier with any questions at 413-528-9973.

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ZBA Public Hearings on Cell Towers

Two applications for cell towers to be sited in Monterey at 31 Main Rd and on the New England Keswick property at 73 Chestnut Hill Road have taken center stage for the Monterey Zoning Board of Appeals with public hearings in August and again on September 26. The hearings were to be continued with a third hearing on October 24, but one of the ZBA members was unable to attend so the applicants requested that the hearings be continued until all five ZBA members could be present. The ZBA voted to continue the hearings until Wednesday, November 16 at 2 pm for the 31 Main Road site and 3:15 pm for the 73 Chestnut Hill Road site.

The cell tower application process has been complicated by the fact that the revised cell tower bylaw approved at the Annual Town Meeting in May has not yet been approved by the Attorney General (AG). ZBA chair Fred Chapman has begun each hearing stating the situation with the bylaw (the Attorney General has until November 23 to respond) and alerting the applicants that the ZBA retains the right to make changes based on any changes from the AG's office. At the September 26th hearing, AT&T's attorney, Michael Dolan, acknowledged the delay and said that his client is willing to move forward with the application. Dolan also apologized for the late submission of new propagation studies the ZBA requested in August varying the heights of both towers and the location of the proposed tower at 31 Main Road.

The initial application for the tower at 31 Main Road proposed to locate a 160-foot tower 60 feet from the property line. The telecommunications bylaw specifies that the distance of towers from property lines shall be 1½ times the height of the tower, and AT&T has requested a variance from the setback specifications of the bylaw. The ZBA requested additional radio frequency or propagation studies that show the coverage when the tower is located within the proper setback and at varying heights. At the September 26th hearing, AT&T's engineer, Francis Malaban, provided propagation studies showing varying degrees of coverage when the proposed tower is >

Felix Carroll

Firefighter Scotty Sheridan tests out the Monterey Fire Department's new hydraulic cutters, a crucial tool in the department's extrication equipment known as the "Jaws of Life." The firefighters spent their Wednesday drill nights in October training with the new tool. The training included an evening of classroom and field study led by representatives of the tool's manufacturer, Holmatro. The tool is designed to cut through the stronger, thicker steel found in today's motor vehicles. The Fire Department wishes to extend its gratitude to Formel Motor Company in Housatonic, which donated the junk cars our firefighters used for extrication training. Formel has been a longtime supporter of the Monterey Fire Department and other fire departments.

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moved out of the setback and at varying heights. Even with increasing the height of the tower to 199 feet in the approved location there would be a loss of the optimum or in-building coverage. Propagation studies show cell-phone coverage at three levels: on the ground outside, in a car, and in a building.

Dolan began his presentation at the September 26th hearing by informing the ZBA that AT&T has agreed to several of the requests made by the ZBA: AT&T agrees to allow emergency services for the town to locate their antennas on both proposed towers at no charge; AT&T agrees to locate the transformers for the cell towers in the equipment compounds; AT&T agrees to locate all utilities underground; and AT&T recalculated storm water and improved drainage at both proposed locations.

All the hearings have featured Zoning Board of Appeals members working with a steep learning curve to educate themselves on the technology of cell towers and antennas (strength, angle, gain) and to understand the variables of height and location in relation to the siting of the two towers. For professional technical assistance the ZBA has retained the services of consultant Richard Comi, owner of the Center for Municipal Solutions, a company that specializes in helping communities with cell-tower applications. Comi seems to have worked more in the Midwest than in New England, and at the September 26th hearing he sparked a bit of contentiousness with the AT&T representatives by requesting more data. AT&T's attorney Michael Dolan pointed out that Comi is not a licensed engineer and said that he believes that Comi's requests are making the application process more difficult and confrontational. ZBA chair Fred Chapman diffused the situation by stating that the ZBA knows relatively little about optimal siting of cell towers and requesting that the parties involved simply try to answer each other's questions.

Regarding the proposed tower at 31 Main Road, Comi asked the AT&T reps if they would consider removing the antennas that would provide coverage to the north of the site "Because there is nothing up there." Director of Operations Maynard Forbes took exception to this statement saying, "I beg to differ. Beartown State Forest and other remote locations like that are where we really need it [in terms of emergencies]." Buddy Rogers, a property owner abutting the proposed tower location at 31 Main Road, opposed lowering the height of the tower, stating, "If you are having a heart attack in your house or in a car you care about loss of coverage." Rick Mielke stated that he was probably the only person at the hearing "who will actually see the tower [31 Main Road] from my home" and that if you are going to have a tower this is not a time to minimize on height and skimp on coverage.

The tower application for 73 Chestnut Hill on the New England Keswick property does not have the setback issues of 31 Main Road. However, there are still questions about the height of the tower and the viability of the access road. Again AT&T's engineer, Francis Malaban, provided propagation studies showing the coverage differences with the varying heights of the tower as per the request from the ZBA. The proposed tower height for this site is 140 feet with a 2400-foot access road on 104 acres. Another AT&T engineer, Jesse Marino, stated that the road width was changed from 10 feet to 12 feet, an enlarged turnaround was added in response to concerns about fire trucks accessing the site, and additional retention ponds and drainage structures were added in response to ZBA concerns about the access road. Marino also described additional mitigation plans for the proposed compound area, including tree planting and seeding.

Monterey resident Howard Leavy asked the ZBA, "How can you be thinking of lowering the towers and cutting off service for people? The Town should try to give all residents equal services." Leavy compared it to the Verizon DSL-line situation where some residences received the valuable Internet service and some did not. Fred Chapman stated that even

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with the two proposed towers there still would not necessarily be coverage for the entire town.

Doug Bruce, a representative from the Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BRNC), was present and submitted a letter to the ZBA stating that they are the owners of a 501(c)(3) land trust that protects a piece of land called "Bob's Way Preserve," which features 2.4 miles of foot trails and "Dave's Bench," a meditation bench with a scenic view. Bruce stated that the tower is sited 800 feet from their abutting property line and that "The tower will be very visible from the preserve and will result in the loss of that view shed. Camouflage may help but it [the tower] will still rise at least 50 feet above the tree line." Bruce also expressed concern about the access road: "We at BNRC take the long view. Regardless of the life of the tower, that road will remain and could be developed."

ZBA chair Fred Chapman asked attorney Dolan if his client would consider limiting the road for future use. Dolan demurred, saying, "The road is on private property and there is no reason for my clients to limit their future rights." Chapman asked Dolan, "If the tower looms large above the meditation bench, would AT&T be willing to relocate the bench?" Dolan said, "Sure."

Another resident abutting the New England Keswick property, Jeff Purvis, reacted to the suggestion that the entrance access be located closer to his property line. Purvis described the proposed tower location: "This is a pristine mountain top that is used as a meditation spot, and no mitigation or camouflage will change the fact that there is going to be a giant tower up there. As a homeowner near the tower, it is devastating to me; I will have to move."

After the hearings were closed, the ZBA remained to deliberate on the proposals. ZBA alternate member Jon Levin stated that trying to sort out the variables and minor disagreements between the consultant Richard Comi and AT&T was troublesome. Cynthia Webber, ZBA Clerk, stated that, for her part, "It would be easier to get used to a cell tower and not a giant fake tree." ZBA member Bob Lazzarini found it problematic that AT&T was asking for several waivers from the bylaw, and he is not sure what the mechanism for waivers would be since no mention is made in the bylaw. Lazzarini wondered if the bylaw should be revised again to mitigate some of the issues, such as enlarging the allowed size of the compound in the bylaw.

The ZBA and consultant Richard Comi will meet again with representatives from AT&T on Wednesday, November 16, at 2 and 3:15 pm at the Town Hall in Monterey.

— Maggie Leonard

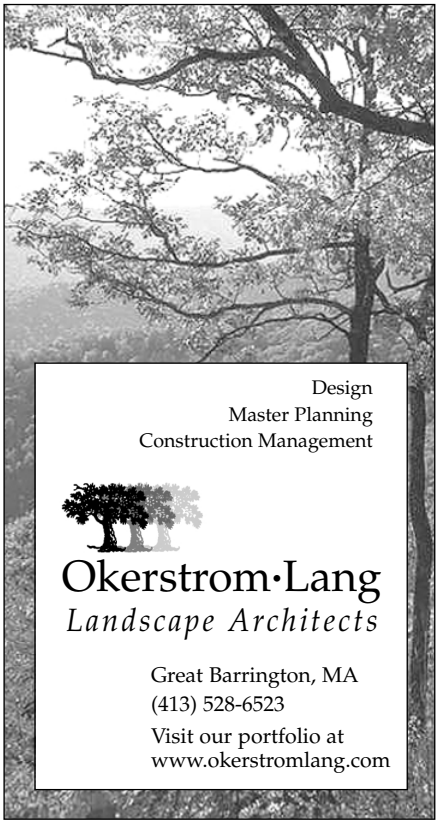
Community Potluck Nov. 16

At the kickoff October Potluck Supper we had a fascinating and very instructive evening led by Tammis Coffin, Berkshire educator, who spoke about the history of the Mohican Indians and the beauty of the Berkshires in the fall. We are grateful to her, and hope she will come back again.

For the November Potluck, we have a new twist, very appropriate for the season. Connie Wilson and Kit Patten will facilitate a community sharing on the subject of gratitiude. Please bring stories, songs, poems, art, memories, and heartfelt statements. Everyone will have the opportunity to speak, and we will all have the joy of listening to how gratitude informs and inspires our lives. In the words of author Douglas Woods, "We don't give thanks because we are happy. We are happy because we give thanks."

The next Monterey Community Potluck Dinner will be held on November 16 at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil and a place setting and silverware for yourself. All are welcome.

— Kyle Pierce & Barbara Dahlman



Monterey Library Notes

Book Discussion Group

The adult book discussion group will be meeting on Monday, November 28, at 7:30 pm to discuss *Her Fearful Symmetry* by Audrey Niffenegger. At the following meeting on December 19, the book will be *The Lost World of the Kalahari* by Laurens van der Post and on January 23 the group will discuss *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford. There's always room for more in the discussion—come join in on the fun.

The youth book group had their first meeting, but it's not too late to join. As long as you can read by yourself you can join in on the monthly fun of a book discussion with snacks and games! Call the library for more information or keep an eye on the library website, which includes an events calendar you can use to confirm when groups or events are happening. Our site is part of the Town of Monterey website (www.montereyma.gov/public—go to Town Departments and then The Library)—check it out!

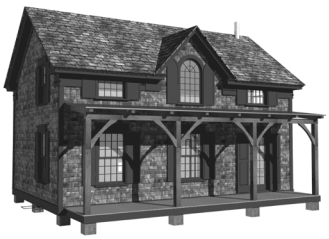
E-books from CWMARS

Cynthia Laino of CWMARS came to the Monterey Library this past month and gave a workshop on how to download from the digital collection. Monterey is part of CWMARS (a network of public, academic, school, regional, and special libraries in Central and Western Massachusetts) and therefore we pay for and own a share of the collection of downloadable e-books, audio books, and videos. This collection has become more and more popular and is growing all the time. Of course Internet connection speed is an issue in Monterey, but you can download an e-book even on dialup. We have instructions for how to download at the library and are happy to help you as best as we can. New devices being released all the time make it a little more complicated, but as Cynthia said she will help us out. Whenever a new device is released, she tries to get one and sit down and work it out herself. Many of the devices make it easy to purchase titles—but you can borrow items as well, and, most importantly, all the new titles and many of the old ones can work on many different devices, including the Kindle which just starting allowing this kind of use.

The easiest way to start this process is to google CWMARS digital catalog. Once you get to the site you'll be able to browse the catalog to see what's offered. If you are still interested at that point, there are two free software downloads you should do to your PC or Mac which allow you to use the Overdrive system of checking out and using the materials. It is important that you download this software first. Then you may go back to the catalog. If someone else has checked out an e-book it is the same as taking it off the shelf (an item may checked out to only one person at a time), so due to the popularity of the items you may be put on a waiting list. After the lending period is over you will not be able to access the file containing the material again, even though it still shows on your computer, unless no one else is waiting for it, in which case you can renew it. If you are on the waiting list you will receive an email when the item is available. Some titles are always available from the digital catalog (these can also can be found elsewhere on the web at sites such as Project Gutenberg) and are free because they were published before the 1920s. The digital catalog has a link to get you there. Once your choice of titles is available, it is easy to download to a computer or to some mobile devices. The final step is to then transfer it from your computer to an eReader such as a Nook, Kindle, or Sony, or an MP3 player if it is an audio book. Many of the audio books can be burned to CD and used in your car player as well.

This technology is constantly changing, and the catalog is being added to every day. If you don't see something that appeals to you or don't understand how to work something, please come in and talk to us. Just by going to the website and looking around you will find helpful lists of what devices are compatible with what, and links to help you use this service, which is growing more and more popular. Some authors are publishing exclusively electronically now—who knows where all this will end up? The Monterey Library building is limited in size but this service is just one way that joining CWMARS has greatly expanded our collection and our ability to serve the needs of Monterey's readers.

— Mark Makuc, Library Director



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Community Center News

Do you know how long it takes a plastic duck to sail down the Konkapot River at Bidwell Park? During the Community Center Fun Day, an enthusiastic group of duck watchers found out that it could take anywhere from two to twenty minutes depending upon the route and the current. The Duck Derby along with pumpkin rolls and pony rides were just some of the activities available to all during the Fun Day at the Monterey Community Center (formerly the Wilson McLaughlin house) property at the corner of Main and New Marlborough Roads. Luscious baked goods were available for sale, as well as sandwiches from Gould Farm, and music by Peter Poirier and Karl Finger made the beautiful fall day even more festive. Vegetable and fruit decorating was also very popular, with participants turning eggplants, squash, oranges, and other produce into some very clever animals and people.

The purpose of all this activity was to raise funds to renovate the Wilson McLaughlin House and make it into a Community Center for the town. Now that the driveway has been completed, the old oil tanks have been taken away, and asbestos has been removed, the next step will be to tackle the lead paint on the exterior of the building. It's a slow process, but progress is gradually taking place. For more information about the community center, see our website at www.ccmonterey.org, where you can also find out how you can make a tax-deductible contribution or contact us if you would like to help out in some other way.

— Laurie Shaw
Wilson McLaughlin House Committee

Bidwell House Colonial Thanksgiving Party

The 1750s Georgian Saltbox residence of the Reverend Adonijah Bidwell will be decked out in harvest decorations for the Bidwell House Museum's fifth annual fall fundraising party, *Our Colonial Holiday of Thanksgiving*, on Saturday, November 26, from 4 to 7 pm.

Luminaires and lanterns will light the way to the historic home for a holiday get-together in Reverend Bidwell's own parlors. Local musician David Reed will play acoustic guitar, banjos, and more, presenting his special blend of folk and country blues. The silent auction will feature antiques, gifts and other treasures. Cider, wine, hors d'oeuvres, and a colonial cocktail will be served. "It is a rare opportunity to be a guest in these rooms," said Barbara Palmer, the museum's director. "In season, visitors take guided tours of the house, but once a year this is our chance to welcome and thank the community, members, and friends right in the historic rooms." All proceeds from the party support the museum, its programs, maintenance of the historic structures, and the preservation of its open space.

The Bidwell House Museum is the Berkshires' colonial history museum, located on 192 acres of gardens, stone walls, fields, and forests. The museum is on the National Register of Historic Places and presents an authentic experience in life-ways of the Berkshires in the 1750s. The house will reopen to the public on Memorial Day 2012. The grounds are open year round for hiking and nature watching during daylight hours.

Tickets to the Thanksgiving party are $45/$35 for members. For more information or reservations, please call 413-528-6888 or go to www.bidwellhousemuseum.org.

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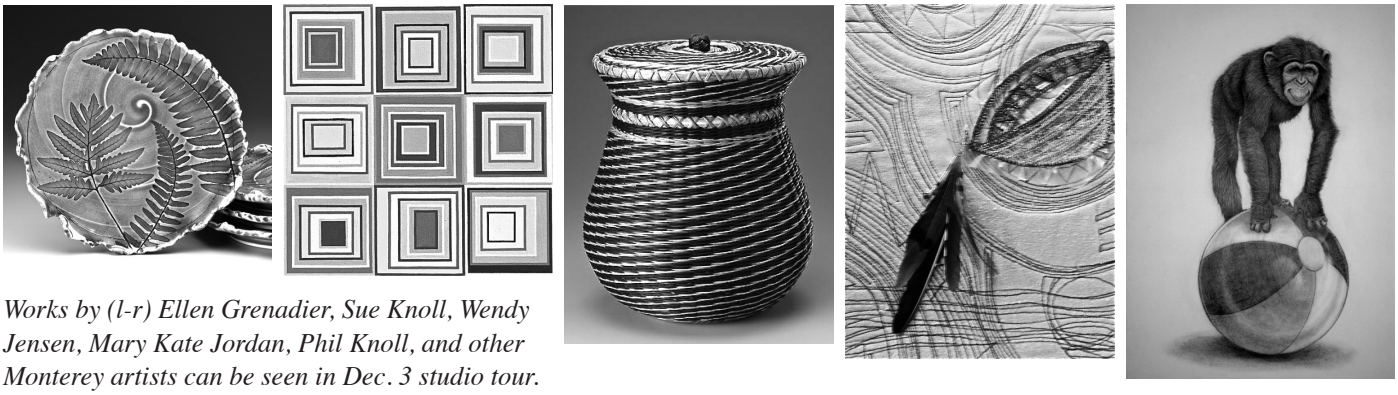

Works by (l-r) Ellen Grenadier, Sue Knoll, Wendy Jensen, Mary Kate Jordan, Phil Knoll, and other Monterey artists can be seen in Dec. 3 studio tour.

Monterey Makers Studio Tour Dec. 3

This year's Monterey Makers Studio Tour will be held on Saturday, December 3, from 10 am–4 pm. Over a dozen artists/makers will be opening their studios for a daylong studio tour. Don't miss a unique opportunity to visit some of the many artists living here in Monterey. See their studios; see their work. Visit them all or just the ones that spark your fancy. Keep the holidays in mind: many will have work to sell. Find the special gifts you've been hoping for, or simply give yourself the gift of enjoying our local artists. Pottery, fiber arts, furnishings, and food are just a few of the offerings.

This is another event sponsored by the Monterey Cultural Council. Look up our new website for more information: www.MontereyMaCC.org.

See you there.

Create Holiday Handcrafts at Monterey Library

This year we celebrate Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, and Christmas all within a week of each other. Come prepare for the Winter Feasts of Light by igniting your own creative fires by creating your own holiday handcrafts in five workshops led by Mary Kate Jordan. After basic instruction and practice you'll focus on the creative project, or projects, that interest you. Choose among hand-stitched home décor and small gifts. Patterns, instruction, and some tools and materials will be available.

Handcrafted work takes time and attention, so we'll meet at the Monterey Library from 10–11:30 am on five Tuesday mornings: November 1, 8, and 15, pause for two weeks, then meet again on December 6 and 13. With questions, and to register, contact Mary Kate Jordan: 413-528-5557, or online, MaryKate@TheJordanCenter.com.

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The Bidwell House Museum

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November 26, 4-7pm

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Yin / Yang

it was a day like any other
in town a man drank his lunch in the corner of a dark old smelly bar
his wife passed on almost a year ago
a woman waited in the local hospital for her husband to come out of surgery
he would never emerge
two men in their 30s robbed a liquor shop
the kids at school made fun of a boy who lost his leg from bone cancer
a grandmother who doesn't talk to her daughter anymore looked through tear stained picture albums

there was a deer walking through the forest ears twitching
watching from a treetop was a golden eagle.
down the road two young lovers picnicked in the meadow.
the sun filtered through the spring rain clouds.
The otter played in the stream.
a blue heron stood motionless on a rock.
There were butterflies hugging the dirt road for warmth.
A young boy was skipping stones on the motionless lake.
two crows laughed from afar
it was a day like no other

— B. Hirsch

L.A. Harbor, Rawson Brook

Every evening my grandfather would return
from the holds of ships to the little kitchen.
Oil cloth.
Plate of stacked smelt
we silently devoured together in a ritual division,
he the silvered bodies, I the fanned lace tails.
Then a wash of words over the table in a foreign tongue,
eddying, deep-running
beneath my ear pressed tightly to his chest.
The spring tide sighing on the shore below the cliffs.

I could float those moments down this stream
in the sighing light of the dying summer.
Slip them in at the reedy edge,
watch them as they bobbed out
over deeply submerged boulders,
shot through shallow rapids.
I would rush ahead to the bridge to wait
as they slid under
then emerged on the opposite side.
Vessels heartbreakingly buoyant on the moving water.

— Colleen Johnson

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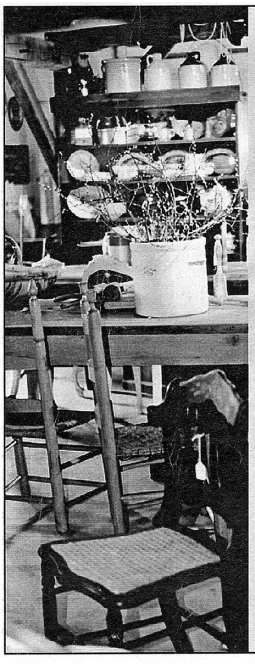

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Ghosts of Summer Weeds

Remember last August when your boat motor kept stalling because the prop was securely wrapped in long thin weeds mixed with curly twisted weeds? Well, they and their friends are products of the plant-protection program initiated in the winter of 2010/11 by Mother Nature and friends with the heavy snow blanket that prevented the Lake Garfield drawdown from doing its job. And, they just want to live and reproduce more like themselves.

Friends of Lake Garfield (FLG) members have done a sampling of the kinds of plants clogging the lake's boats, and here are the results. There was no influx of some exotic growth in the small lake, but we saw *Elodia nuttalii*, a long stem with very small twisted leaves in a spiral fashion; we saw wild celery, the straight thin multileaved plant, also big leaf pondweed and curly leafed pondweed. These are all natives, just grown to excess. Try Googling these plants for a view.

In the channel between the small and large bowls of Garfield, we again saw *Elodia nutallii*, wild celery, and one Eurasian milfoil—an exotic believed to be under control.

In the east end, we saw again *Elodia nuttalii* and wild celery, and in addition saw leafless milfoil. This one looks like a corkscrew stem with bumps: the bumps are its leaves. The stem and one small blip of a flower on top are the whole plant. No floating weeds were seen in Parker's cove. The plants we found give notice that we've not been invaded by exotics; we're just inundated by our own native species of plants.

We also tested the water for phosphorus and for calcium. Phosphorus is food for plants, and elevated calcium means a welcoming environment for zebra mussels. Both results are reported as milligrams per liter of lake water. Site # 1, the small bowl of the lake, had a calcium reading of 10mg/liter and phosphorus 0.028 mg/liter. This is consistent with the small bowl's prior readings.

The open bowl of the large lake had a reading of 13mg/liter for calcium and 0.025mg/liter for phosphorus. This phosphorus result of 0.025 was higher than the one taken in July of this year, which was 0.018 mg/liter. The higher reading says there may be more nutrients in the large bowl than we had previously, which might encourage plant growth. Does this perhaps indicate more decaying plants in the large bowl, the deepest part of the lake? We cannot be sure yet.

The east end of the large lake, the third area we monitor, had readings of 11 mg/liter calcium and 0.020mg/liter phosphorus, again consistent with past readings. Overall, no great changes were seen.

The labs say we have a lake-water environment that slightly favors zebra mussels (the calcium being above neutral, favoring shell growth) and a phosphorus level that is not much different from prior readings, except for the large bowl of the lake. In other words, the plants did not grow wildly in the small bowl and at the east end because they were fertilized; they grew because they were protected by early and deep winter snows. So what can we do? We can hope that drawdown is not foiled by Mother Nature this year, and we can pull and rake all the weeds at or near our docks as drawdown takes away the water from the docks. Third, we can think about applying for hand pulling of plants if this happens again.

There are two questions to be asked and solved before we consider hand pulling of weeds by divers, the method being used in Center Pond in Becket to control that pond's exotic Eurasian milfoil. First, who will pay for the divers to pull the plants, and, second, where will the pulled plants be disposed of? Remains to be explored.

— Pat Edelstein, for FLG

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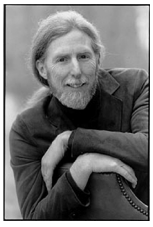

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"Garden Gustation"
What's Cooking from Monterey Gardens & Farms

Fruitful Fall

The days are certainly getting shorter and the nights a bit cooler. Despite our lack of heavy frost, I'm feeling close to done in the garden. Not that we're even close to being done, but my head has stopped making garden "to do" lists every morning. There are still plenty of beds to put to bed; carrots, beets, potatoes, leeks, and celeriac to dig; garlic to plant, etc. . . . But I love this time of year, and for the first time Stephen and I were able to go apple picking in our own orchard. Now, it was a short trip and the harvest was only a couple of dozen apples, but apple picking nonetheless.

The reason there were only a few apples is because we just planted our orchard two years ago. My family all chipped in for my fiftieth birthday and sent me off to Windy Hill Farm to choose three- to four-year-old trees for our soon-to-be orchard. Seeing as fruit trees take a number of years to bear fruit, there was no time to lose. We chose eight trees, five apple varieties and three pear. We've been nursing them along, excited at the possibility of our own fruit. Last year we watched as the blossoms came and went, as well as the early killing frost. We ended up with a single apple, which made it pretty special when harvesting time came around. And this year, loads of blossoms. We were just hoping there were enough bees around. We were very excited to have two beautiful Bosc and one Bartlett pear. The Vermont Beauty pear made no showing this year. The apples, on the other hand, gave us a number of satisfying organic apples. They won't win any beauty contests, but their flavors were superb.

When the days start getting cooler I can't help but start thinking of comfort foods and the smell and warmth in the kitchen. I dream about cinnamon-infused applesauce cooking down in a pot, apple pie bubbling over, apple crisp and melting ice cream . . . and warm apple muffins. My mother will be thinking of apple recipes at this time of year too, since she started an Apple Festival in my hometown over forty years ago. Apple pancakes, apple betty, applesauce sundaes topped with Libby's special crunch, etc. In her efforts to bring new baked goodies to sell at the Salem, Connevticut, Apple Fest, she came up with the following muffins. She won an Honorable Mention from her local newspaper for them. Not only do they use apples but also pumpkin. Since we haven't grown any pumpkins I will be substituting our butternut squash.

Judy's Apple Pumpkin Muffins

This recipe makes about 1½ dozen muffins or one dozen muffins and one small loaf pan. These muffins are even better the next day.

Combine the following in a large bowl:
2½ cups flour
1½ cups sugar
1tsp. soda
2 tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. cloves
½ tsp. nutmeg
a little salt

Beat all of the following together in a separate bowl:
2 eggs
1 cup pumpkin or butternut squash puree
½ cup oil
2 cups of peeled, chopped apple
½ cup nuts and/or raisins

Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix well. Drop into greased muffin tins and bake at 350° for about 20 minutes or until cake tester comes out clean.

Happy fall cleanup!

— Wendy Jensen, wendygj@gmail.com

Help Needed to Set Up Monterey Ice Rink Nov. 26

Help is needed assembling the Monterey ice skating rink on November 26th at 9:30 am (the Saturday after Thanksgiving). Up to twenty volunteers are needed to attach the boards to form the rink in the Monterey Pavilion behind the firehouse on Route 23.

Please come to the rink at 9:30 am, and if you have one, bring a power screwdriver, broom, or dolly. Monterey will provide free food and coffee.

The rink will be flooded once overnight temperatures reach low double digits, with a projected opening of about January 1, weather permitting.

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Take Me Back and Forth to the Tides

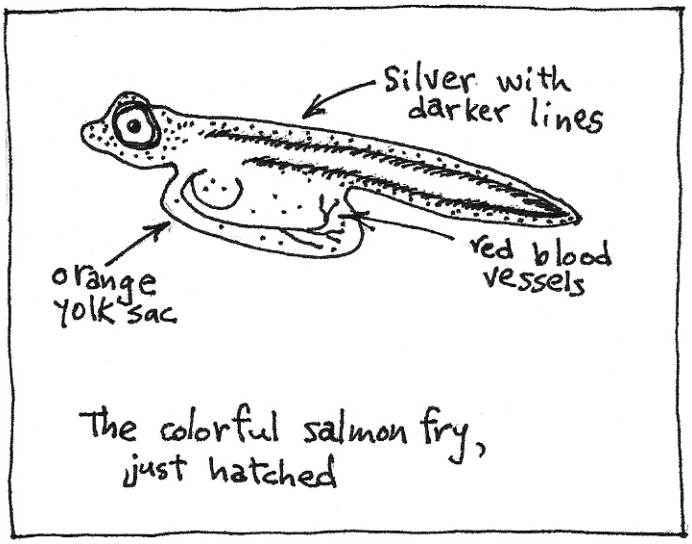
There's a sign by Little Clear Pond in the Adirondacks asking you not to go fishing because it is a protected fish-rearing place for "landlocked salmon." We looked in the water and did not see any salmon, so I made a little note to get Our Scientists to look up this one for me. As an old marine biologist, I was remembering that word on the quiz, *anadromous*, and how it could practically be answered with one word: Salmon. The other word was *catadromous*, and the answer was Eels.

Both words refer to fish that migrate between fresh water and the sea. The salmon are born in fresh water and head to sea at a young age to spend most of their lives there. They find the river of their childhood and swim up it to spawn, to produce the new generation of little "sack fry" that still show a yolk sac from the egg and then, as they get bigger, head for their lives at sea. These are anadromous fish.

The eels do it the other way around, starting life way out at sea (the Sargasso Sea) and then moving up rivers as little "elvers" to spend their whole lives up there until it is breeding time. Then it is time for that last journey out to sea, to spawn and start the cycle over again. The eels are catadromous fish.

Though I feel ready for the marine biology vocabulary quiz, I am puzzled about the landlocked anadromous fish. How can they do like they do if they are stuck in some lovely Clear Pond in the middle of the Adirondacks? Don't they need those vast oceanic horizons, those tidal rhythms, that salt water flowing through their gills?

As a landlocked old marine biologist I have asked myself the same questions. Though I grew up in central Connecticut, we were on a great tidal river. The alewives and shad came up every spring and the tide went out twice a day. The Connecticut River mudflats were part of my daily rhythm in a way that I miss, here on the Konkapot and Housatonic. Once in a while I get over to the Hudson, though, and the tides speak to me again.



Last week we were out on the low-tide flats in Germantown, seining for fish samplings with a group of high school students. We identified the fish, and though there were no salmon, there were herring and striped bass. These were little first-year babies, looking forward to a life at sea. They can make that journey from Germantown because there are no dams to stop them. Some year in the spring, they'll come back up, like the alewives and the shad. Maybe there will be salmon with them, the wild kind.

Those landlocked salmon do move up and down between brooks and larger bodies of fresh water, like Lake Champlain for instance. The ones in Little Clear Pond started out in the Adirondack Fish Culture Station, the only hatchery in New York State that is focused solely on *Salmo salar,* the Atlantic salmon. The adults are wrangled in from a 360-acre pond and some big circular tanks. Females are given an anesthetic or sedative before being "milked" of their eggs. The males don't get any pain pills, as these sometimes make them sterile. Their milt are gently squeezed out to cover the eggs in pans, which "replicates" the fertilization process, according to the hatchery website.

In nature, a female thrashes and lashes out a depression in moving water in her own natal streambed and puts her eggs there. The male comes along and deposits his milt, or sperm, and the current takes it over the eggs, fertilizing them.

Since 1800 the wild Atlantic salmon have been extinct in my old Connecticut River. But fish people have worked for

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years to change that, and now we have a few wild fish coming up the river every year, some even making it as far as Massachusetts and the Westfield River, where natural spawning of Atlantic salmon is taking place once again. The salmon go leaping up the fish ladders, somehow making it back to their spawning streams.

Some day we may find salmon here in the Konkapot. Why not? There are now water chestnuts native to China growing in huge mats on the Hudson. These are not the kind of water chestnuts we think of when planning a Chinese meal, but they are edible and were introduced on our New England waterways, for food, in Concord, Massachusetts in 1859. You can eat them raw or boiled. I have found the pointy black seeds in the Hudson, in our fish sampling net, and cut them open to have a look. The PCBs and dioxins and such are mercifully invisible, so the crisp white meat of the nut looks clean and fine against the black shell. I didn't eat it, and I wouldn't eat a salmon out of the Hudson or the Connecticut. These famous athletic fish can come back to the Konkapot and they will be safe from me. I'll welcome them like the tides: elemental, historic and new, and just plain gorgeous.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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Arborists' Day at Bidwell House Nov. 9

The Bidwell House Museum has been chosen as the recipient of this year's Arborists' Day, a day of volunteer tree care by multiple western Massachusetts arborists. "We are thrilled to be the recipient of this generous gift," noted the museum's Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair George Emmons. "We take care of the trees around the museum as best as we can, but some of our grand shade trees are showing their age." The arborist teams will remove dead and dangerous limbs and trees and advise on strategic replanting of replacements.

Arborists' Day will take place on Wednesday, November 9 (rain date: Thursday, Nov. 10), beginning at 8 am, and the public is invited to observe the work being done. This will be the eighth consecutive year of celebrating Arborists' Day in the Berkshires. Many of the tree-care professionals have made giving something back to the community a yearly tradition on this day by lending a hand to a nonprofit organization to help preserve the trees that make the Berkshires such a great place to live. Berkshire Botanical Garden is coordinating the day and presenting an educational lecture for the participants after lunch.

"The museum is grateful to Berkshire Botanical Garden and all the participating tree-care professionals," noted Bidwell Director Barbara Palmer. "The trees are an important part of the historic setting of the museum. The donated work will protect and improve the grounds for the next decades. I look forward to welcoming anyone interested in observing the arborists and their equipment at work that morning. "

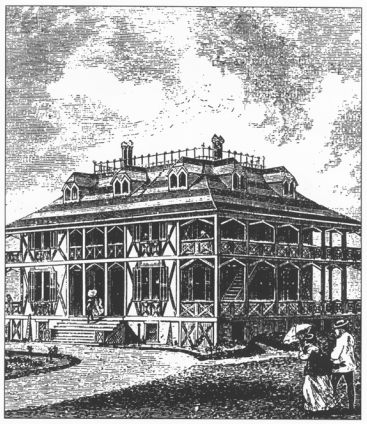
The museum is located at 100 Art School Road in Monterey. For more information call 413-528-6888.or go to www.bidwellhousemuseum.org.

Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser for Otis Library

The annual Otis Library All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast fundraiser will be held on Sunday, November 13, from 8–11 am at the Farmington River Elementary School on Route 8 in Otis.

The event celebrates Veterans Day weekend with free pancakes, sausage, coffee, and juice for all veterans. There will be a raffle for a professional photograph donated by Otis resident and *National Geographic* photographer John Stanmeyer. Everybody from Otis and surrounding communities is invited to attend.

Proceeds from the breakfast will go toward library computers, books, DVDs, extended hours, special children's events, and guest author appearances.



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The First Thanksgiving and Autumn Harvest

Most of us learned the history of Thanksgiving in the first few grades of elementary school. In the next month the handful of boys and girls at the little Monterey schoolhouse on Main Road will be taught by Lynn Webster what she knows about it. Her father is a full-blooded Oneida Indian, and as a Native American Lynn is careful to separate fact from fiction, omitting almost four hundred years of myth and make-believe.

The Oneidas were one of the six original members of the powerful Iroquois Federation. In the eighteenth century their domain extended all the way across what is now New York Sate. From east to west, members of the Federation were Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and, near Pennsylvania, the Tuscarora. The Oneidas were historically hospitable and generous in helping other homeless native people who had been pushed from their ancestral lands by encroaching colonial settlement.

In 1783, the Oneidas offered land to the displaced Mahicans, who had given up trying to maintain their way of life around Stockbridge. However, within another generation, even though both tribes had common records of loyal fighting with the colonists in the Revolution and were highly regarded for that reason, they were forced to move to Wisconsin, where to this very day Lynn's relatives still reside.

Now, at the Monterey School, Lynn Webster likes to focus on the Native American tradition of Thanksgiving featuring the abundance and diversity of the Earth's autumn harvest. The occasion that is usually portrayed as one big feast was really three days of celebration, including a number of meals, music, dance, and military marching. In addition to the wild fish and game, the Indians also brought nasaump, a dried-corn porridge laced with fruits and berries, and pompion, a dish of stewed pumpkin and squash.

The intent of the 1621 Plymouth Plantation colonists was more to give thanks to Massasoit and the Wampanoags for a successful growing season under their protective guidance, preventing failure of the colony from almost certain starvation. Although there were prayers and chanting, the religious devotion of today did not take place until two years later in 1623 And the first religious Thanksgiving in this country had already taken place in 1619 at the Jamestown settlement in the colony of Virginia.

As the days of shortening daylight draw us ever nearer to Thanksgiving, the flaming foliage streaks the high cheek bones of our rugged hills with a deciduous war paint, a haunting apparition of the history of the struggle of indigenous cultures against the encroachment of European colonization. So as we bow our heads, let us give thanks for our Native American heritage honoring the land itself and the lore of the Earth as a living spirit, as well as for the autumn harvest we are receiving.

— George B. Emmons

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Political Poison: Inside the Beltway

During a recent Saturday evening out with my best friend, she suggested I consider running for public office someday. Our talks generally revolve around future plans and dreams, but being an elected official has never been high on my list. As I contemplated the possibility, I realized that while I believe in the power of government to do right by its citizens, I am a cynical and disillusioned young person when it comes to politics. The columns and commentary on gridlock are plentiful, and you need only skim headlines to realize there has been a collapse of national political intelligence. You might say I am fighting an internal war between my future choices and today's realities.

I have no desire to spend my time raising money, a given in today's political scene. The figures, especially on the national level, are staggering, depressing, and unfathomable. While I am aware that local public offices escape the dollar phenomenon, to an extent, the turnoff is palpable and the big picture is difficult to stomach. I'm not sure how the campaign would work, because while on the one hand I'd be running to be elected, I also know governing is an entirely different ballgame. I worry I would say certain things to get elected because people have things they want to hear—maybe even in sound-bite form because that is all the media can really report on. I want to believe what I say, and do what I promise, but representing the people is about what they want—I often wonder if today's national politicians still think about this. I can only hope.

Despite these hesitations, I have great hopes that I will be a public servant in some capacity. I believe in public education, both as a path to opportunity and as a core ingredient to a vibrant democracy. I believe in the fabric of our social safety net, while recognizing some need for future reforms; I stand by access to health care, being eternally grateful that in this job market, my mother's health care would cover me too if the need arose; I believe in capitalism, but not an economy or a market solely by an elite set of profit-driven interests; consumers deserve protections and an advocate. Finally, I believe in entrepreneurial spirit, but also the support structure to help it flourish; how can you get started with nothing at all?

I am a millennial, a female, a minority, and above all an American. When I look at the political scene, especially at the national level, I realize the next generation of American leaders will look vastly different. A profile of the "Super committee" reveals primarily wealthy, white, elderly men and despite the current gridlock, they possess an uncomfortable amount of power. I see key women: Kim Gillan in Montana, Tammy Baldwin in Wisconsin, and Elizabeth Warren in Massachusetts, and I feel a flicker of hope again. I've felt it before, at President Obama's inauguration, for a brief few days. While I like what I know about Alan Khazi, Elizabeth Warren is an incredible candidate for the U.S Senate; I believe she will represent not just Massachusetts, but the interests of many low-income and middle-class Americans.

Despite my support of the President, I was never convinced that Obama could sell real change to the entrenched rigidity of the Washington establishment. Democrats' disillusionment, while understandable, is partially the product of their own crushed idealism. I voted for the President in 2008 and I plan to again in 2012, and my vote will not be as much for him as against the Republican nominee because I know that individual cannot come close to representing my own beliefs. Sometimes though I wish my vote was for something, rather than against someone who makes me feel slightly queasy.

Thus my internal war continues: a genuine frustration at the current political state of affairs versus the desire to participate in it and help change it as we move forward into the twenty-first century. The constant questioning continues: where and how can I make the most positive impact? Am I too bitter and disillusioned, and am I underestimating the real capacity of public office because of the constant dysfunction in Washington?

Over one hundred and fifty years ago, President Lincoln dedicated a battlefield in Pennsylvania to those who gave their lives for the unity of a nation "so that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." Today, it doesn't seem that government is really any of these things, and it's easy to see how distrust thrives, as evidenced by record low approval ratings and perpetual gridlock. But alongside that reality, I still believe in government and its potential. I'm beginning to realize that I can't shy away from the possibility that I will find a place in it because there is too much at stake to sit on the sidelines while we flirt with the allure of self-destruction.

— Tarsi Dunlop

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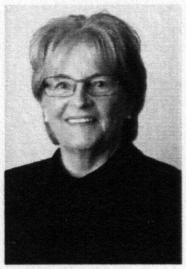
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From the Meetinghouse . . .

The Great Central Fire

On the eleventh day of this eleventh month, at the eleventh hour, or even at any hour, take a moment to remember the veterans of World War I. They called their conflict The War to End All Wars, and they believed it. Roll your eyes and call that slogan naïve, idealistic, or juvenile, but keep in mind that these folks didn't have the soul-fracturing next decades of the twentieth century behind them to insist on pessimism and cynicism.

My mother's Aunt Alice was a nurse who cared for the wounded in France. I have a letter my mom's sister Nora wrote to her Aunt Alice in 1918. While the girls, seven and five years old, were recovering from the flu that took the life of their little brother, Nora's cursive pencil scrawls describe a full family life centered around a kitchen warm with full-hearted feeling and the fragrance of good home cooking.

And we've arrived at the time of year when warmth again moves back into its place at the center of things. From November through March, we New Englanders tend to cluster around the fire. Maybe it's the time of year to also take a tip from our country's native mythology.

Our scientifically accurate name for the pivotal star that shines in the clear, dark night skies we enjoy in Monterey is the North Star. With a bit more poetic insight, some of the native tribes call this light The Great Central Fire. I didn't really understand why until about eighteen months ago when I caught a glimpse of the (even darker) night sky from a clearing in the mountains south of Denver. And there she was: this shimmering fire, glowing like a pale coal overhead with the whole night sky spinning, perhaps consciously, perhaps indifferently, around her.

But I was no longer indifferent. It shook me to see this expression of the natives' central fire, and therefore my own, so clearly face to face. Shook me in a good way. I'll always remember the moment, and the awe and gratitude it generates in me still.

In a strange way, the church on the corner in the middle of town fills a similar role in Monterey. Especially on Sundays. Not just because that's when the church is actively gathered (since the church is the people, and people are then in the structure), but because with the library and post office closed and the general store out on a limb of its own, on Sundays it's the bright, living fire burning at the center of things. A warmth at the center hearth of the town, just as the fireplace, woodstove, furnace, or kitchen stove provide warmth in your home. A warmth focused on The Great Central Fire of Being, welcoming the opportunity to glow for every one of us, no dogmatic agenda attached. A warmth that will welcome a parallel but different warmth from the building across the street, once that's in place, too.

So here's a holiday challenge: as you begin to go about your holiday baking rituals, or as you put a pot of water and cinnamon sticks on the stove to simmer if you're not a baker, share the warmth of holy intention, however you conceive that to be. Hold our town in your heart as if your heart were a great central fire, a fire whose good will ignites a flame of well-being for us all.

— Mary Kate Jordan

Joe Baker's Paintings at Knox Gallery

Recent oil and pastel paintings by Monterey artist Joe Baker will be on display in the Knox Gallery at the Monterey Library from November 4 through 28. An opening reception for the artist will be held on Saturday, November 5, from 7 to 9 pm. All are welcome.

Joe Baker is a painter working in both oils and pastels whose work has received awards at the local and national levels. Recent paintings exhibited include subjects from the Berkshires and other sections of New England, the Adirondacks, travels to the Rockies, and also some less objective pieces.

Joe's vocation is computer programming—custom software and websites. Prior to this career, he was for many years an instrument maker. His violins, violas da gamba, and hardanger fiddles are owned and played by musicians on three continents, as well as being included in university and museum collections.

Many people in this area know Joe as a musician and contradance caller—he has been playing fiddle and calling square and contra dances in the area with the band Mountain Laurel since 1978. He has lived in Monterey since 1974.

— Libby Wolf

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Remembering Ben Zweig

Ben Zweig was a friend we always looked forward to seeing. Something about Ben always brought us all together. As second homeowners' kids, get-togethers were sometimes hard to come by, and therefore greatly valued. Whether it was at the library picking out his latest book (and also collecting those colored, heat-sensitive pencils), joking with us on the swings on Sunday mornings at Greene Park, or swimming and playing at our favorite hangout spot—Lake Garfield—when Ben was around we all knew we were in for a fun time. Not only did his humor get us all bonding and laughing over whatever he had joked about, but he was always ready to "take one for the team." Spinning us on the mini carousel at the park or carrying the largest bucket of water up to the top of the sand at the beach so we could properly flood our dug-out sand rivers, he loved putting smiles on the rest of our faces.

All these memories of our friend Ben will remain with us forever. Ben will be sorely missed. May he rest in peace.

— Leah Weisgal, with input from Adam Kern, Zac Transport, Annie Transport, Anna Messer, and Simone Messer

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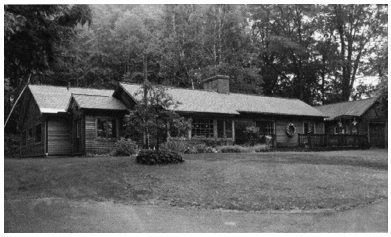

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Remembering Owen Bernstein, Ph.D.

Owen Bernstein lived a life of commitment to social justice, equality, peace, fairness, animals, and the environment. His beliefs were often expressed as being motivated by the Jewish principle of *tikkun olum*, the Jewish obligation to repair the world: leave it a better place than the world you were born into. In his almost 90 years, he and Bebe Kirshenbaum Bernstein, his wife of 62 years, whom he cherished, forged a life together based on *tikkun olum*.

Owen Bernstein imparted his beliefs, through work, action, and example, to his children and grandchildren, and touched the lives of so many with his sweetness and gentleness. For these qualities he was adored by his family: wife Bebe Kirschenbaum Bernstein; daughters Freya Bernstein and her husband, Dr. Martin Broff, Karen Bernstein Belfer and her husband, Andrew Belfer; and his four grandchildren, James, Gaby, Adam, and Samantha—who always called him Papa with a depth of affection that they all shared.

One of Owen's causes was Holocaust remembrance. He was instrumental as founder and past Chair in the development of the Kupferberg Holocaust Center at Queensborough Community College. He led the acquisition and restoration of a Torah rescued from the time of Nazi rule, which Torah is part of a Holocaust Memorial housed at his Synagogue, the Bay Terrace Jewish Center. At Bay Terrace Jewish Center he was chair of the Holocaust Memorial Day Remembrance activities for many years.

He was a liberal and a Zionist—espousing causes popular or not as long as he believed in them. He marched in Washington in 1963 with Dr. Martin Luther King at the "I Have a Dream" Rally as President of the American Jewish Congress Chapter of Brooklyn. He devoted much of his career to helping the mentally and physically challenged and economically and socially disadvantaged. He began his career as a vocational counselor for the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene. As a visionary for how the mentally challenged should live, he was part of the early de-institutionalization community placement movement, and the creation of the Brooklyn Developmental Center, where he held the position of Deputy Director. He served on the Governor's Commission on the Handicapped, which oversaw the closure of the Willowbrook Center in Staten Island. He and his wife, Bebe, co-wrote a book and teaching guide in the 1970s, called *Work for Independence*, based on a community-based model that was way ahead of its time. He was also Executive Director of one of the early War on Poverty agencies in the1960s and 1970s, the Community Council of Greater New York.

He was born in Brooklyn, where he lived most of his life. He and his wife then moved to Bayside, Queens. He was most proud of his family vacation home in the Berkshires in Monterey, Massachusetts.

ॐ

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Historic Tree Sculpture

To the Editor:

We went to the last ZBA hearing about the Chestnut Hill cell tower, knowing we had a lot to learn. For one thing, alert critics of my essay in the October 2011 issue of the *Monterey News* point out that the cell tower I drew there on Chestnut Hill looks more like a windmill (as in Don Quixote, not wind turbine) and besides, they tell me, the folks building these towers make them look like trees, on steroids maybe, but still local species. In these parts they tend to be giant pines, but in Florida they are mighty palms. They stick up 60 feet above their mortal neighbors, so they are a glorious and permanent tribute to the natural landscape. Or a reminder of it, anyhow.

The ZBA meeting on October 24 was "continued," which means postponed, to November 16 at 3:15 pm. Maybe others will want to come along and make their suggestions as to types of trees. It seems obvious to me that the tower on this hill ought to be put up as an American chestnut, and I can supply the drawing for this.

I know the company will preserve the "natural scenic qualities of the mountain region," as is required by the Berkshire Scenic Mountains Act, which was adopted here by Town Meeting on May 3, 2003. This support is evidenced so far by a marvelous intention to move a certain stone bench to a new site on Bob's Way trail. Right now this bench provides a viewing spot to the natural horizon, soon to be rather altered. Solution: move the bench! Look the other direction!

This commitment on the part of the tower builders is commendable, and I know it will pertain to many viewing spots all over town. For instance, the top of Chestnut Hill is the scenic horizon from all over Lake Garfield, including the Town Beach. So that's a heap of moving to do: lake, beach, summer homes. We also look out that way from our house here on the south-facing slope of Hunger Mountain, on Hupi Road. So we are looking around for our new house site, also where we think Hunger Mountain will sit well when we get it moved so the view from up there stays "natural and scenic."

Meanwhile, that new giant Chestnut Tree will be a boon if our old rotary phone ever gives out. We'll be happy to switch to the tree. When I was a kid we did this from the tree house to the porch, using string and orange juice cans. I know I've got the string, but does orange juice still come in cans?

Come on down to the Town Hall at 3:15 pm on November 16 with your suggestions, drawings, new house sites. If you are a West Montereyan, your tower at 31 Main Road comes up at 2:00 pm that same day.

— Bonner McAllester

Glynis Marsh

October 30, 2011

Veterans Day Observance 11/11/11

All Veterans and others are invited to attend an observance of Veterans Day at 11 am on 11/11/11. We will meet on the Monterey Church steps. Please arrive before 11 am. There will be a brief program starting at 11, with George Emmons ringing the bell 11 times, remembering all the Veterans of all wars.

— Dean Amidon
Veterans Memorial Committee

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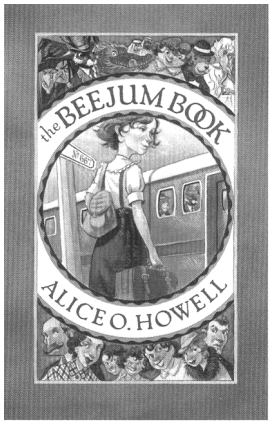

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— Andrew Harvey, author of ***The Direct Path***

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Calendar

Every Monday except holidays: Select Board meeting, Town Hall. Start time 6 pm (no meeting Nov. 7).

Tuesdays, Nov. 1, 8, 15, Dec. 6, 13: Holiday crafts workshops with Mary Kate Jordan, 10–11:30 am, Monterey Library. Info: 413-528-5557. See p. 12.

Saturday, November 5: Opening reception for exhibition of paintings by Joe Baker, 7–9 pm, Library. See p. 20.

Sunday, November 6: Daylight Savings Time ends. Transfer Station goes to winter hours.

Wednesday, November 9: Arborists' Day at Bidwell House Museum, 8 a.m. to noon. See p. 17.

Thursday, November 10: Free Blood Pressure Clinic, Town Hall, 2–3 pm.

Friday, November 11: Veterans Day. Observance at 11 am on Meetinghouse steps. Town Offices, Library closed.

Sunday, November 13: Otis Library Pancake Breakfast fundraiser, 8–11 am, Farmington River School. See p. 17.

Tuesday, November 15: Public meeting with Planning Board and ZBA on first draft of zoning bylaws reorganization, 7 pm, Town Hall. See p. 5.

Wednesday, November 16:

Community Potluck Dinner, 6 pm, Monterey Meetinghouse. Program will be community sharing on gratitude. Free, everyone welcome. See p. 9.

ZBA hearings continued on proposed cell towers at 31 Main Road (2 pm) and 73 Chestnut Hill (3:15 pm). See p. 7.

Thursday, November 24: Thanksgiving. Town Offices, Library closed.

Saturday, November 26:

Bidwell House Colonial Thanksgiving Fundraising Party, 4–7 pm, Bidwell House Museum, 100 Art School Road, Monterey. $45/members $35; information, 413-528-6888. See p. 11.

Help needed with Ice Rink setup, 9:30 am, Firehouse Pavilion. See p. 15.

Deadline for returning submission forms for "Monterey Miniatures" exhibition in Knox Gallery at Monterey Library, open to all area artists. See p. 6.

Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 pm, Dewey Hall, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel, caller Jeff Walker. Adults $8–10, children $5. Information 528-9385.

Monday, November 28: Adult book group will discuss *Her Fearful Symmetry* by Audrey Niffenegger, 7:30 pm, Monterey Library. Newcomers welcome.

Friday, December 2: Opening reception for "Monterey Miniatures" exhibition in Knox Gallery, 6–8 pm. See p. 13.

Saturday, December 3: Monterey Makers Studio Tour 10 am–4 pm. Over a dozen artists/makers will be opening their studios. See p. 12.

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be left in the drop box on the loading dock of the General Store (still). Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4347 or e-mail montereynews9@gmail.com.

The Observer
September 26 – October 25

High temp. (9/26)	78°
Low temp. (10/6)	33°
Avg. high temp.	62.7°
Avg. low temp.	45.6°
Avg. temp.	54.2°
Total rainfall	5.34 in.

Rainfall occurred on 17 days.

Contributors

We thank the following folks for their recent contributions.

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Contributions from local artists this month:
Pat Arnow, p. 20; Maureen Banner, p. 13;
George Emmons, p. 18; Bonner McAllester, p. 16.

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